

Amherst Recycling & Refuse Management Committee

Meeting Minutes: March 6, 2014

In attendance: Arnie Alper, Cristina Cox Fernandes, Craig Goff, Brenda Kennedy-Davies, Sue Morrello, Susan Waite (DPW liaison)

February 6, 2014 minutes were amended and approved.

Working Group Reports

Composting – Final draft of a letter to Maria Geryk requesting a meeting regarding organics separation at the schools was presented. Discussion and edits followed. Motion to approve letter as amended passed unanimously. Susan Waite will make edits and send letter out.

Next potential focus of group will be pursuing an organics collection operation for the Amherst Cinema Block businesses.

Transfer Station / SWEF

Susan Waite reported that the financial reports are being reviewed as well as a list of items to cut costs. Our discussion of the regional waste contract tonight will have a bearing on determining the group's focus.

Downtown Recycling

Brenda reported that the group met with Alan Snow and Guilford Mooring. The group is looking to get the BID involved and will meet with them soon. An adopt-a-bin system or plaque on recycling bins with name of sponsoring business was suggested. Alan will be placing seven recycling bins downtown starting June 1. Issues to be resolved include signage, visibility and bin lids. Alan is also working on the design for the split bed truck with a lifting mechanism. Susan will set up a meeting with Sara laCour, Director of the Amherst BID.

Regional Waste Contract

The Town is asking if the Recycling Committee would support sending Transfer Station MSW (municipal solid waste) to Covanta Springfield for three years at an average rate of \$62.00/ton. Susan Waite created a spreadsheet of comparative trash and recycling costs, which includes information from Covanta and Valley Recycling. Much discussion followed about the merits of the MSW disposal options, with a focus on environmental & financial impact.

A motion was made that the Committee stand by its report from a year ago (Waste Disposal Options for the Town of Amherst, dated 2/15/13), and decline to express a disposal option preference.

Discussion:

Arnie's perspective was that the decision is largely a financial one. He is not convinced that contracting with Covanta would guarantee a savings and thought that savings might be achieved by other means such as engaging another vendor either by bringing the transfer station trash elsewhere or contracting someone to operate the town's transfer station.

Craig expressed the opinion that we don't have enough information about the type of waste to be shipped (there was confusion over whether construction and demolition waste would be included in the contract). He would like to remove the right of first refusal clause and pay slightly more (\$65.00/ton) to retain flexibility over whom the Town contracts with for electronic, prescription drug, bulky, and organic waste for the duration of the contract.

The motion passed with one opposed.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Sue Morrello.